



Natural Resources Conservation Service
6013 Lakeside Blvd.
Indianapolis, IN 46278

December 19, 2006

INDIANA BULLETIN NO. 300-7-10

SUBJECT: LTP - Workload Prioritization Tool for 2007 EQIP Applications

Purpose: To distribute the EQIP Workload Prioritization Tool and instructions for its use.

Expiration Date: September 30, 2007

Background: Attached is the EQIP Workload Prioritization Tool for FY 07. This tool was developed to assist with prioritizing EQIP applications for conservation planning and field visits. With the requirements for field visits and the development of conservation plans prior to ranking, it is important for us to have a way to manage the increased workload this may create.

In Indiana we will have planning completed on all FY 07 EQIP applicants prior to ranking them. Many of the promoted FY 06 deferred applications have been planned, and based on historic sign up rates, most counties will have adequate time to complete field visits and conservation plans on new applications prior to the contract selection date.

It is recommended that District Conservationists schedule field visits when the producer is in the office completing the EQIP application. The sooner the field visit and planning are done the easier it will be to manage workload. We must use all available resources to complete conservation planning in a timely manner.

District Conservationists need to keep their Area Conservationist advised of their workload and progress so that Area Conservationists can schedule staff to assist with the planning workload, if necessary.

The Workload Prioritization Tool is to be used to prioritize conservation planning visits where the application workload exceeds available staff planning capacity for the time available. It should be used only with the input and concurrence of the Area Conservationist.

Once you are in a backlog situation use the EQIP Workload Prioritization Tool during the initial office visit with the producer. Click on the practices that the producer believes they need to install to treat resource concerns that they have identified. For each practice selected, the tool uses values from the Conservation Practice Physical Effects and an economic efficiency factor to assign a point value. The point value for all practices is added up to get the Total Environmental Effects Points.

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It is up to the Area Conservationist and the District Conservationist to decide how to best use the tool in a given county. It is anticipated that conservation planning would be completed first on those applicants with the highest score on the Workload Prioritization Tool.

While we intend to complete conservation plans on every 2007 EQIP application, we recognize that unforeseen participation interest and short turnaround times may overwhelm our staff capacity. In those instances it is important for us to document our decisions on providing timely service to our clients. The Workload Prioritization Tool provides us with a defensible method for making those decisions.

Any applications that can not be planned and quality reviewed by the contract selection date will be eligible for inclusion in the next available round of funding and must receive priority planning assistance for the next round. See the EQIP Guidelines Schedule of Events for contract selection dates.

If you have any questions, contact Harold Thompson at 317-290-3200 ext. 320, or Jim Dunaway at ext. 334.

/s/

JANE E. HARDISTY
State Conservationist

Attachment